August 5, 2005   ESD-MMO-05-001
TO: Earth Sciences Division Staff
FROM: Bo Bodvarsson, ESD Division Director
RE: Effort (Time) Reporting and LETSlite

During this past year there were 2 audits on effort reporting (time reporting/LETS). While there were multiple finding, there were three areas where significant improvements are needed: 1) actual timekeeping and effort reporting practices; 2) excessive labor adjustments (i.e., resource adjustments); and 3) inadequate procedures to ensure compliance with overall Laboratory policy. Please refer to the Directorate's memo sent on behalf of Director Chu.

We need to immediately improve our practices of entering and approving time through "LETSlite" and effectively manage how employees charge their time and how approvers approve time. Lab-wide, only 1/3rd of effort is approved through "LETSlite." This leaves 2/3rds that does not get approved until a days after weekly and monthly sweeps. While we maintain strict controls on approving travel and procurement costs, we need to maintain strict controls on time reporting (i.e., salary expenses).

The Directorate is counting on each Division to fix these problems. A drastic change in the culture of accounting for time worked is needed. **From now on, employees must enter their own time and approvers approve time using "LETSlite."** In the few instances that an employee is away from the office and/or has no access to a computer, necessitating someone else to:
    (1) Approve time, they must contact their back up approver.
    (2) Input time, they must call Valarie Espinoza-Ross (x5234), the ESD Timekeeper whereby she will document in an email your phone call itemizing the days and projects to charge your time.
If at all possible, we want to avoid manual approvals on paper time sheets.

The time it takes for an employee to enter their time using LETSlite is on the order of 2 minutes. If you are an approver, it typically takes 5 minutes, but if you have multiple or more complex personnel situations, this may take up to 15 minutes.

This effort is expected from all Laboratory employees, including UC faculty members who are expecting to charge LBNL project IDs for their own salary as well as their employees or student salaries.

Starting in August, we will enforce that all ESD monthly employees enter their time by mid month (the date of the 15th). If you are unfamiliar with LETSlite go to http://esd.lbl.gov/workplace_resources/business_practices/time.html or contact Valarie to obtain training on how to enter or approve time. Available on this website are the Lab's step by step instructions on how to use LETSlite as well as ESD's At-A-Glance that describes the roles and responsibilities for an employee and supervisor on reporting and approving time.

Our goal is to achieve 100% in using the LETSlite time reporting system by both employees and supervisors. It is your responsibility to charge time appropriately and accurately.